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## **EPA partnership helps transmission segment "cool it"**

Columbia Gas Transmission and Columbia Gulf Transmission are partnering with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Natural Gas Star Program in an effort to reduce methane emissions in our operations. Since methane is one of the "greenhouse gases" believed to contribute to global warming, reductions are beneficial to the environment. But, the transmission segment sees even more immediate benefits from this partnership.

"We're convinced that responsibility when it comes to the environment pays off," said Steve Wilner, vice president, Environmental, Health and Safety. "Efforts to reduce our methane emissions often improve the operating efficiency of the pipelines, which can lead to improvement of the bottom line."

Beyond these global and financial benefits, Lisa Carter, TCO and Gulf's Natural Gas Star manager says there may be future potential for the transmission segment to profit from the reductions it implements now.

In an effort to regulate greenhouse gas emissions, the EPA may develop an emissions trading program. This innovative policy would permit companies, principally utilities, to buy and sell emission credits. For example, a company such as Columbia that reduced its emissions beyond recommended levels could sell the extra credits to companies unable to reach compliance levels. The net effect, according to the EPA, is that overall greenhouse gas emissions are achieved in a more cost-effective manner.

TCO and Gulf are estimating the size and value of the methane emission reduction efforts the transmission segment has made since 1993. Future NewsLines articles will discuss the value of these efforts and cite the more notable examples.